

VZCZCXRO9741
RR RUEHLN RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHMO #3673/01 3531412
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 181412Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1242
INFO RUEHVK/AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK 3047
RUEHYG/AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG 3404
RUEHLN/AMCONSUL ST PETERSBURG 5162
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4449
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 2033
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 1612
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1200
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1920
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 2971
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0798
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 1373
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 0792

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 003673

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

COPENHAGEN FOR ERIK HALL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [ENRG](#) [KGHG](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: CLIMATE CHANGE: RUSSIA'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

REF: STATE 116939

¶1. SUMMARY: In response to reftel request, Post reports that Russia's lead agency on the political aspects of climate change is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology (MNRE). The Federal Service for Hydro-meteorology and Environmental Monitoring (Roshydromet), a semi-autonomous agency under MNRE's umbrella, handles scientific and technical aspects of the issue. The Ministry of Economic Development handles Joint Implementation projects under the Kyoto Protocol and other economic issues connected with climate change. The Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Economic Development deal with energy efficiency issues. The MFA's Environmental Protection Section within the Department for International Organizations deals with climate change issues in that ministry. Russia has no plans to add climate change specialists to diplomatic missions. END SUMMARY.

¶2. In response to reftel request, Post provides the following information on the structure of Russia's government agencies on the issue of climate change. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology (MNRE) is Russia's lead agency on climate change issues, and Deputy Minister Stanislav Ananyev is the government's lead official on those issues. He served as Russia's delegation head at the recently concluded Poznan climate talks. MNRE's Office for International Cooperation coordinates all international programs associated with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol. As in the case of Poznan, MNRE will continue to appoint high-level representatives to international meetings and conferences to decide issues of political significance connected with climate change. The Presidential Administration also has a department which deals with environmental protection issues. It reports to Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin.

¶3. The Federal Service for Hydro-meteorology and Environmental Monitoring (Roshydromet), a semi-autonomous agency under MNRE's umbrella, deals with scientific and technical issues associated with climate change and is the nominal lead agency for UNFCCC issues. It is the agency that reports on Russia's greenhouse gas emissions inventory and prepares national reports under the UNFCCC. It also pays Russia's annual dues to UNFCCC secretariat. This agency will likely retain these responsibilities for the foreseeable future.

¶4. Until earlier in 2008, Roshydromet was Russia's lead agency on climate change. However, Presidential decree No.724 of May 12, 2008, "Issues of the System and Structure of Federal Bodies of Executive Power," incorporated Roshydromet into the MNRE system and transferred responsibility for climate change policy to MNRE.

Roshydromet no longer has the authority to task other agencies with information requests, but must route those requests through MNRE. However, the Roshydromet staff working on climate issues is virtually unchanged. Within the last 18 months, MNRE's Office for International Cooperation established a four-person section devoted to international cooperation in the protection of atmospheric air. The Ministry's Department of Nature Protection has also established its own Air Protection Section, also consisting of four staffers. Both of these sections cooperate closely with Roshydromet.

¶5. The Ministry of Economic Development handles economic issues associated with the Kyoto Protocol, specifically Joint Implementation projects. Oleg Pluzhnikov, Deputy Director of the Department of Property and Land Relationships and Economy of Nature Utilization, is our main contact on these issues. All proposals for Joint Implementation projects come to this ministry for approval by a specially established commission. The members of this commission are high-level representatives such as deputy leaders of other interested agencies.

¶6. The Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Economic Development are both active in the area of energy efficiency. The Energy Ministry has prepared a report, to be presented at the Copenhagen talks next year, forecasting Russia's greenhouse gas emissions through 2020. During the year remaining before the Copenhagen conference, the report will be circulated through the interagency process for consideration and elaboration.

¶7. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Environmental Protection Section in the Department for International Organizations deals with climate change issues. Aleksandr Pankin, Deputy Director of the

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Department for International Organizations, and Oleg Shamanov, Chief of the Environmental Protection Section, told us that because of a lack of staffing, there are no plans to add climate change specialists to Russian diplomatic missions.

¶8. On November 18, Post hosted a reception for science and environment officers from Moscow's diplomatic missions to encourage discussion of climate change and other issues. Other than the United Kingdom, missions rarely approach us to discuss climate change. However, the Moscow network of foreign and domestic environmental NGOs is quite active, particularly on the issue of energy efficiency as a component of the larger climate change question.

¶9. COMMENT: Many shifts in government structures followed President Medvedev's transition to power in May 2008. Our contacts are cautious in general about discussing these recent changes, and they caution that further changes are still possible, particularly as climate change is a complex and constantly evolving issue which affects a broad range of sectors of critical strategic importance to the Russian economy.

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